

ATLANTA FIRE ON MONDAY NIGHT DESTROYS SEVENTY-FIVE BLOCKS IN NEGRO SECTION AND THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ARE HOMELESS

Atlanta, May 21.—Fire that swept through approximately seventy-five blocks in the residence section of Atlanta from Decatur street north and northeastward to Ponce de Leon avenue late today caused a loss that Mayor Candler tonight estimated at \$3,000,000. One woman, Mrs. Bessie Huges, died of shock and sixty were treated for minor hurts.

From 1,200 to 3,000 homes were destroyed, according to Mayor Candler and others who toured the littered zone around the burned district late tonight. The homes ranged from flimsy negro cabins to handsome residences along Ponce de Leon avenue valued at \$10,000 or more each. Many homes in this beautiful residence section were destroyed by dynamite which finally conquered the flames after the fire department aided, by fire fighters, from half a dozen nearby cities had failed.

Troops on Guard.
The burned area was guarded throughout the night by Georgia guardsmen and members of the officers' reserve training camp at Fort McPherson. Local police early in the night turned guard duty over to Col. Charles R. Noyes, U. S. A., in command of the Fort McPherson training camp.

There were few reports of looting, and the only arrest made up to late at night was that of a man charged with attempting to steal a piano.

Civilians were not even allowed within blocks of the fire area and newspaper men who went through with passes were halted at every corner and their credentials scrutinized. The guardsmen had their rifles.

Smoldering Fires.

Throughout the burned areas, in some places was only a block wide and in others ranged to several blocks, hundreds of fires smoldering long after midnight. The wind that blew in a gale this afternoon and swept the flames over the sheets of water that fire fighters threw up, had died down late tonight, however, and both Mayor Candler and Fire Chief Cody expressed the opinion that there was no further danger. One reason that the fire gained such headway was that firemen were fighting a blaze in West End, a residence section across town from the big fire that broke out shortly after noon. There were several other small fires in the afternoon and these led to reports of incendiary.

Intimates Incendiary.
"German spies," was heard everywhere, and Fire Chief Cody intimated that he thought the flames might be incendiary. "I have made a thorough examination of the entire section."

Mayor Candler said in reply to this, "and I can positively state that the fire is not of incendiary origin."

The mayor and members of the Chamber of Commerce arranged a mass meeting of business men for tomorrow morning to raise a fund for the sufferers, and tonight the Red Cross and Associated Charities housed scores at the auditorium armory, in churches and private homes. Preparations were made to furnish breakfast to five thousand.

Soldiers on Guard.

Col. Noyes, with headquarters in an automobile repair shop near the burned district, had mapped out the burned area early in the evening and placed his companies to guard various sections. Strict orders were issued that nothing be removed from streets, vacant lots and yards. Night Chief of Police Jett and Col. Noyes agreed that to allow anything to be removed would invite looting. There had been little of that late tonight. One man was sent to police station charged with trying to steal a piano that he had found on the sidewalk. That, according to Night Chief Jett, was the only known case of looting. For blocks on either side of the actual burned district no civilian could enter except on a pass signed by the mayor, police officials or Col. Noyes.

Under Police.

"Our work is being done strictly under the police," Col. Noyes explained tonight. "We are acting just as though we were civilians sworn in to guard property."

Mayor Candler made a tour of the burned area tonight. He issued a statement saying the fire was acci-

dental in origin. "I am positive," he said, "that there is no chance of its having been incendiary. It started from a small fire and was swept along in the teeth of a wind that blew almost with the force of a gale. I knew at 3 o'clock this afternoon that we were going to lose a great many houses."

City Equal to Occasion.

Mayor Candler declared that Atlanta could take care of its homeless and that while the many offers of outside help were appreciated that it would be unnecessary to take advantage of them. In this he was joined by leading members of the Chamber of Commerce.

All officials agreed that a great deal of relief work would have to be done tomorrow.

An emergency fund was started tonight and it was announced that a meeting would be held tomorrow to further the relief work. One of the first subscriptions reported to the mayor was \$1,000 from Ernest Woodruff, a local capitalist.

The fire started in an obscure negro section of the city at Decatur street just east of Fort street this afternoon, burned several blocks of small houses clean, jumped over five low brick buildings and a row of small shacks and swept on nearly a mile unobstructed until it reached a better residence section. At 8 o'clock tonight it was two blocks beyond Ponce de Leon avenue and not under control. The fire fighters, who included hundreds of soldiers who aided by an abatement of the wind, but by no means had mastered the flames, which many feared would not be conquered until they burned themselves out at the edge of Piedmont Park, a large open space in the northeastern section of the city.

Thousands Homeless.

Thousands of persons tonight were homeless and are being fed and quartered in public buildings by the Red Cross and a committee of Atlanta men.

The loss at 8 o'clock was estimated at from \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000, but persons familiar with real estate values stated that any estimate at this time was nothing more than guesswork. The flames did not attack the more exclusive residence sections, but a large part of the devastation was in neighborhoods composed largely of homes ranging in value from \$2,500 to \$6,000.

Scores of pretty homes in a comparatively new section of the city tonight were blown up with dynamite to the blaze, but four hours of this work had not resulted in much good. The conflagration was eating up home after home, more slowly than in the afternoon when driven by a high wind, but moving forward relentlessly.

Driven Back Two Blocks.

The dynamiting began at Boulevard Place at about 4 o'clock, but the fighters soon were driven back two blocks to Ponce de Leon avenue, where the greatest effort was made. Aided by the wide avenue and the slowly dying wind, soldiers, firemen and private citizens blew up blocks of houses. Once or twice a house on the north side of the street would catch fire, but for almost two hours these sporadic outbreaks were stopped.

Later, however, the flames gained a foothold across the street, swept on a block to Vedo Way and moved on in a northeasterly direction.

Between Edgewood avenue and Decatur street, at the start of the fire, the flames confined themselves to the section between Boulevard Place and Hilliard street. At Edgewood they moved eastward as far as Prospect Place in spots, wiping out a block now and then. Practically the entire section bounded by Hilliard street on the west, Prospect Place on the east, Edgewood avenue on the south and North avenue on the north was laid waste.

Peachtree Street Threatened.

At North avenue North Jackson street became the western boundary and with a slight change in the wind, the fire moved steadily on in a northeasterly direction. It never got nearer Peachtree street, the main thoroughfare of the city, than seven blocks, although at times a momentary change of wind threatened in that direction.

Firemen had been fighting a small blaze in the big Atlanta cotton warehouse, where a great deal of military supplies are stored, and at the same time six residences in West End were burning, when the alarm came in from the Decatur street box. As many as could be spared were sent to this section, but it is doubtful if the entire department could have checked the flames that, driven by a high wind, fairly ate up the small houses, on which rain had not fallen in many days.

Household Goods Piled Up.

Vagaries of the wind caused great alarm in sections that afterwards proved safe and tonight for blocks on all sides of the area of destruction household goods were piled in every conceivable place. These were guarded in most cases by soldiers who were also pressed into all kinds of work.

Several hundred buckets were rushed to Ponce de Leon avenue when the fight centered there. Each soldier was supplied with one and as a tiny blaze started on a roof these men were rushed to it. It was by such detailed methods as these that the blaze was checked at the avenue for so long a time. The presence of the soldiers directing traffic, guarding household goods and keeping people from the danger zone gave almost the appearance of martial law. As far as has been reported tonight, good order was maintained everywhere and there were no attempts at looting.

In a statement to the Associated Press tonight Mayor Asa G. Candler stated that he had fully investigated the reports that the fire was of an incendiary origin.

"There is nothing whatever to support that theory," Mayor Candler said.

The fact that three fires were burning at practically the same time, it is believed lent strength to the incendiary reports.

Where Blaze Started.

The blaze started in the Skinner Storage Company's plant, which is almost surrounded by many small frame houses.

When the flames had jumped across Edgewood avenue and were being driven with incredible rapidity toward the better sections of the city a general call for aid went out. Fire departments at Chattanooga, Mac on, Augusta, Newman, Georgia, Marietta, Ga., and Griffin, Ga., were asked to send aid. Fort McPherson was called upon for all the men that could be spared, business houses were asked to send trucks to haul extra hose and any other supplies and private automobiles were offered by the scores.

The 2,500 men in the officers' reserve corps and most of the members of the Fifth Georgia guardsmen were sent in from the fort and entered into the work lustily, as many of them were working to save their own homes or the dwellings of relatives. Newspaper men sent into the area telephoned along with other reports that their own homes in many instances had been destroyed.

Approximately seventy-five blocks were devastated, but the area cannot be correctly estimated by blocks, as after the fight at Ponce de Leon avenue the flames skirted that thoroughfare on the south side of the street for some distance.

Off to the tonight would not hazard a guess at the monetary loss. The destroyed buildings ranged all the way from shacks occupied by negroes to homes up to \$6,000 or \$8,000. Some estimates were between \$2,000,000 or \$3,000,000, but they were neither from sources nor based on calculations to give them weight.

Starting Point.

The fire started in the Skinner Storage and Warehouse Plant near Decatur street, just east of Fort street, from a cause not determined tonight. It quickly spread to the small houses nearby, which were dry from lack of rain, and driven by a high wind, started to rapidly eat its way north and northeastward. Around the flame-swept area tonight, with its streets littered with broken wires, splinters from acres of dynamited homes and all the odds and ends of furniture and clothing that was gathered in an indescribable mass from hundreds of homes, United States soldiers stood guard. The men were composed of Georgia Guardsmen and members of the officers' reserve training camp at Fort McPherson.

President Signs Bill.

Washington, May 22.—President Wilson today signed the bill increasing the enlisted war strength of the navy to 150,000 men and the marine corps to 30,000.

MANY NEW REGIMENTS TO BE ORGANIZED

To Supply Tactical Formation Necessary for Establishment of Sixteen Divisions of National Guard.

SIXTEEN AERO SQUADRONS

Carolina's Quota: Regt. Infantry, Three Troops Cavalry, Regt. Field Artillery, Two Companies Engineers.

Washington, May 22.—Organization of scores of new regiments of National Guard artillery, engineers, signal troops and cavalry will be undertaken soon to supply the tactical formation necessary for the establishment of the sixteen divisions of the guard provided for in the War Department's plans.

In addition, immediately after the existing State soldiers have been drafted into the federal service, there must be organized divisional headquarters detachments, supply, ammunition and medical trains, heavy field artillery and signal battalions and aero service, two cavalry divisions and many new coast artillery units and reserves.

Infantry Arm.

In the infantry, the arms of the service in which the guard is strongest, thirty regiments and six companies must be created to provide the 144 regiments of the divisional structure.

The principal shortage is in field artillery. Each of the sixteen divisions requires three full regiments of six batteries each, or a total of 288 batteries. There now exists in the guard 108 batteries.

The shortage in engineers is almost as great. There will be needed sixteen regiments, or a total of ninety-six companies, whereas there now are only thirty companies.

Aero Squadrons.

Each division also will have an aero squadron or balloon company, making sixteen air service units.

The first effort of the department is to bring up to full war strength all existing units of the guard. The next step will be to create the new units necessary to complete the sixteen infantry divisions, and the adjutant generals of the States have been instructed that they should prepare for these new organizations without delay. Southern States will be called upon to furnish in addition the following:

Ninth Division—North Carolina, one cavalry machine gun troop, one regiment field artillery, one radio company, signal corps; South Carolina, one regiment infantry, three troops cavalry, one regiment field artillery, two companies engineers, one outpost company, signal corps; Tennessee, one regiment infantry, one troop cavalry, one regiment field artillery, one wire company, signal corps.

Tenth Division—Alabama, one regiment field artillery, one battalion engineers; Georgia, two battalions infantry, one regiment field artillery, one battalion engineers, one wire company and outpost company, signal corps; Florida, two battalions infantry, one battalion field artillery.

Fifteenth Division—Texas, four regiments infantry, one regiment (less one squadron) cavalry, two regiments (less two batteries) field artillery, one battalion (less two companies) engineers, one field battalion, signal corps; Oklahoma, two regiments infantry, one regiment field artillery, one battalion (less one company) engineers.

Eighteenth Division.

Eighteenth Division—Arkansas, one regiment infantry, one regiment field artillery, one outpost company, signal corps; Mississippi, two regiments infantry, two squadrons cavalry, one machine gun troop cavalry, one regiment field artillery, one battalion engineers, one radio company signal corps; Louisiana, two regiments infantry, one squadron (less two troops) cavalry, one regiment (less one battalion) field artillery, one battalion engineers, one wire company, signal corps.

FOR WAR RISK INSURANCE

Washington, May 22.—The administration bill appropriating \$50,000,000 for the government War Risk Insurance Bureau and authorizing it to insure lives of crews on American merchant vessels was passed today by the Senate. A similar measure is pending in the House.

WILL PROTEST TO GERMANY

Against the Detention of American Citizens.

Washington, May 22.—Protests to Germany against the detention of American citizens was made by the State Department today through the Spanish Government. The department has received positive information that the Americans are being held in Germany and has asked for a full and definite statement of the Imperial Government's attitude concerning their departure.

It is pointed out this government always has acted promptly on application of German subjects to leave the United States.

MAXIM SAYS DEVICE CONQUERS U-BOATS

New York, May 22.—Hudson Maxim announced today that he had invented and perfected a device which will make ships immune from the dangers of the submarine. He said that torpedoes, even when fired at close range and striking their targets would explode harmlessly against the hulls of their intended victims.

The inventor made the announcement at a luncheon given in Brooklyn. He asserted that the invention soon will be demonstrated by the government, which already had been advised in details.

"The invention is practical for every type of vessel," he said. "It can be applied within a few months at a comparatively cheap price to the hulls of ships already constructed. The only change necessary in vessels already built will be a slight enlargement in their beams. My device is of solid material and encircles the entire ship from the bow to the stern. It in no sense or manner resembles either a screen or net."

U-BOATS GET GRAIN SHIPS

Vessels With Food Cargoes Were Bound for Finland.

Stockholm, May 22.—(Via London).—Several lighthouse stations reported that German submarines have captured three Swedish steamers loaded with freight for Finland. Numerous submarines apparently are patrolling the Bothnian gulf, working in conjunction with Zeppelins, which frequently are seen at different points off the east coast of Sweden.

Traffic to Sweden by water routes recently was temporarily stopped.

SUCCESSFUL TRENCH RAID

London, May 22.—"Our troops successfully raided the enemy's trenches at Vermelles at noon today," says the war office statement tonight. On the rest of the front there was nothing of special interest to report. One German aeroplane was brought down in the air fighting yesterday and another hostile machine was driven down damaged. One of our aeroplanes is missing."

HAPPENINGS OF 20 YEARS AGO

The Jordan school gave an enjoyable picnic yesterday at Mr. W. G. Frierson's on Santee.

Miss Lizzie Geiger, of St. Matthews, is visiting at the home of her brother, Dr. J. Frank Geiger.

Mr. W. I. Conyers is in Charleston on duty as jurymen at the session of the U. S. District Court.

Engineer Zack Nettles, who frequently ran over this road, committed suicide in Florence a few days ago by cutting his throat.

This is the last week of school at the Institute and the boys are looking forward to many evenings of swimming and baseball.

Mr. J. Horton Rigby has returned from Anderson where he represented this lodge at the Grand Lodge meeting, Knights of Pythias.

Last Thursday morning while absent from home, the house of Mr. Louis Levi, near St. Paul, was destroyed by fire and nearly everything was lost. Mr. Levi's loss will amount to about \$3,000. No insurance.

The jailer reports sixteen prisoners now in jail, six of them belonging on the chain gang and the other ten awaiting trial at the approaching term of court, charged with sundry crimes, none of which, however, are for murder.

PRESIDENT SAYS BERLIN'S INSULTS WERE UNBEARABLE

President Says No Self-respecting Nation Could Longer Have Borne Wrongs.

WAR ONLY WAY OUT OF IT

Mr. Wilson Restates Reasons for Nation's Entry Into Great World War.

Washington, May 22.—No nation that respected itself or the right of humanity could longer have borne the overwhelming wrongs that Germany inflicted upon the United States, President Wilson declared in a letter restating the reasons for this nation's entrance into the war, written to Representative Heflin, of Alabama, and made public today at the White House.

Mr. Heflin had written to the President, saying some of his recent utterances on the war apparently had caused confusion over the issue with Germany. In restating his position the President again made it clear that the United States has no quarrel with the German people, but with an autocracy "which acts upon purposes to which the Germans have never consented."

President's Letter.

The letter follows:
"It is incomprehensible to me how and from what honest person could doubt or question my position with regard to the war or its objects. I have again and again stated the very serious and long continued wrongs which the Imperial German Government has perpetrated against the rights, the commerce and the citizens of the United States. The list is long and overwhelming. No nation that respected itself or the rights of humanity could have borne those wrongs any longer.

"Our objects in going into the war have been stated with equal clearness. The whole of the conception, which I take to be the conception of our fellow countrymen, with regard to the outcome of the war and the terms of its settlement, I set forth with the utmost explicitness in an address to the Senate of the United States on the 22d of January last. Again, in my message to Congress on the 2d of April last, those objects were stated in unmistakable terms.

Only One Purpose.

"I can conceive no purpose in seeking to beloud this matter, except the purpose of weakening the hands of the government and making the part which the United States is to play in this great struggle for human liberty an inefficient and hesitating part. We have entered the war for our own objects clearly stated, and shall forget neither the reasons nor the objects.

"There is no hate in our hearts for the German people, but there is a resolve that cannot be shaken even by misrepresentation to overcome the pretensions of the autocratic government which the German people have never consented."

BELIEVE GERMAN RAIDER AT LARGE

British Naval Authorities Suspect One Has Escaped from a German Port.

New York, May 22.—Information that the British naval authorities suspected that a German sea raider escaped from a German port and was at large was brought to America today by a Belgian relief ship. The Belgian captain said his vessel was held upon by a British drifter May 13 off the north of Scotland. The relief ship halted and the Briton explained, the Belgian captain reported, that the relief vessel, which carries four masts, was mistaken for a four-masted raider which was believed to have left Germany under the guise of a merchantman.

BRAZILIAN VESSEL SUNK

Steamer Tijuca Destroyed Off Coast of Brittany.

Paris, May 21.—The Brazilian steamer Tijuca was sunk off the coast of Brittany yesterday. Part of her crew was picked up.

The Tijuca was last reported as having sailed from Pernambuco for Havre on April 9. She was of 2,304 tons gross.